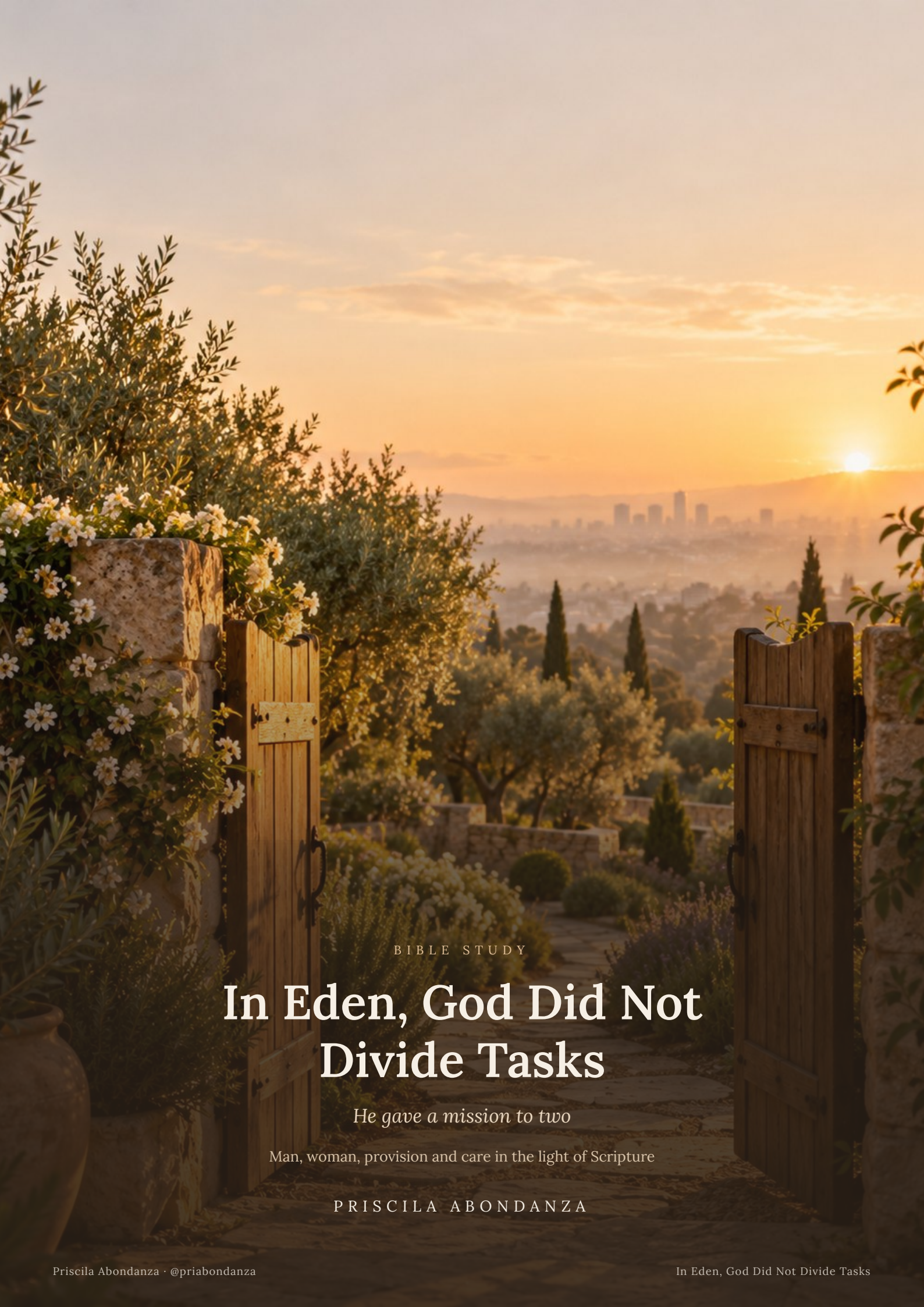




BIBLE STUDY

In Eden, God Did Not Divide Tasks

He gave a mission to two

Man, woman, provision and care in the light of Scripture

PRISCILA ABONDANZA

How to walk through this study

This is the third step of a journey that began with **Ezer Kenegdo, the help of God**. There, we discovered that woman was created as a corresponding strength, a help face to face. Then, in **God's Purpose Where I Am**, we saw that this strength is not confined to a single place. Now we come to a question that runs through many homes, including mine:

*Did God determine that the man provides and the woman cares? Or
did He give the two of them a shared mission?*

To answer honestly, we will separate three layers that usually arrive mixed together: what God designed in the beginning, what the fall wounded, and what history and culture added later. We will look at Hebrew and Greek words, always explained simply, and visit the world in which each text was written.

You can walk through these pages **on your own**, at your own pace, with a pen nearby. You can do the study **as a couple**, with your husband: several exercises were designed for a conversation between the two of you. Or you can walk **in a group**, with other women: at the end there is a guide with six meetings.

Throughout the reading, some boxes repeat. **Understand the context** brings history and culture. **Look at the text** highlights words and details. **Read with care** flags points that call for closer reading. **Bringing it to today** brings the text close to our lives. **Pause to reflect** opens space for personal questions. And **My next step** points to action.

ABOUT THE BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

This study was originally written in Portuguese. In this English edition, Scripture quotations follow the wording of the New International Version (NIV). Where a passage is marked as "condensed quotation", parts of the verse have been omitted and are marked with [...].

A word before we begin: this is not a study to defend one family model against another. It is not about who earns more, who stays home or who is in charge. It is about returning to God's heart for man and woman, and discovering what He dreamed of when He said "you".

In Eden, God did not divide tasks. He gave a mission to two.

The path of this reading

Before we begin

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PART ONE

The design: before any task

Genesis 1 and 2, and the mission God entrusted to both.

The belief we inherited

How many times have you heard that the man is the provider and the woman is the one who takes care of the home and the children? Maybe you heard it at church, maybe at home, maybe you simply saw it happen, without anyone needing to say a word. For many of us, that sentence arrived looking like a Bible verse.

Beliefs like this rarely come from a single sermon. They come through the dinner table, through the way our father and mother organized their lives, through an aunt's comments, through the way the church spoke about "the man of the house", through the advertisements we saw as children. By the time we notice, they are already living inside us.

And they come at a cost. The woman who works feels guilty for not being at home. The woman who chose to dedicate herself to the home feels she "left something behind". The man who loses his job feels he has also lost his manhood. The couple in which she earns more lives with a quiet discomfort that neither of them knows how to name.

PAUSE TO REFLECT

Which of these situations have you lived through, or seen up close? What feeling did it stir in you?

I have always talked a lot about the woman of valor. But I need to confess something: I was also looking for a man of valor. Someone who knew who he was, who knew in whom he believed, and for whom God mattered more than anything else. I had already encountered God, and I knew that when we encounter Him, we begin to love the other person intensely, the way He loves us. That would be security for me.

And God gave me the grace of meeting Caio. A man who complements me, and whom I complement. In more than twenty-five years, we have never seen each other as superior or inferior to one another. I have always worked, I have always wanted to build a career and fulfill dreams, and I found someone who thinks the same way.

Even so, the questions came. Am I outside the "model"? Does God approve of the way we have organized our home? By wanting a career, am I disobeying some principle I never really understood?

This study was born from the courage to take these questions back to the Bible, and let it answer.

Throughout the chapters, we will follow a path in five movements. First, the original design (Genesis 1 and 2). Then, the rupture of the fall (Genesis 3). Next, the layers of history, from ancient Israel to the Industrial Revolution. Then, the texts that open new paths: Proverbs 31, Ruth and Boaz, the women who supported Jesus. And finally, the new creation that Christ inaugurated.

READ WITH CARE

Questioning an inherited belief is not dishonoring those who taught us. Many women and men lived this model with love, faithfulness and sacrifice. The goal here is not to judge choices, but to distinguish what is God's command from what is human custom.

EXERCISE 1

The timeline of my beliefs

Write honestly. No one is going to correct these answers. They are the starting point of this journey.

What did I learn, as a child, about the "role" of man and woman? Who taught me?

What did my church or community teach (in words or by example)?

In which area do I feel the most guilt: providing, caring, or both?

Which belief about man and woman have I never had the courage to question?

A mission in the plural

The Bible begins with a mission, not with a division of tasks. Before any conversation about who does what, God says who we are and what we exist for.

GENESIS 1:27-28 · NIV

"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'"

Notice three details that the Hebrew makes very clear.

1. "Mankind" here is humanity

The word translated as "mankind" in verse 27 is *adam*. It comes from *adamah*, soil, earth: it is "the earthling", the being taken from the ground. In Genesis 1, *adam* is collective, the whole of humanity, and the verse itself explains: "male and female he created them". Only later does the word become the proper name Adam.

2. The image of God is in both

Man and woman together bear the image of God. It is not stronger in one than in the other, nor does it depend on the role each one plays. Dignity comes before any function.

3. All the verbs are plural

Be fruitful, increase, fill, subdue, rule. All plural. The verb "rule" (*radah*) already appears in verse 26: "so that they may rule". God did not say to Adam "rule" and to Eve "bear children". He said to both of them: "you".

LOOK AT THE TEXT

Bringing forth life and caring for creation do not appear as two departments, one masculine and one feminine. They appear as a single mission, entrusted to two people who together bear the image of God. Fruitfulness and the stewardship of the world are born in the same blessing.

This does not mean that man and woman are the same in everything. The same verse celebrates difference: "male and female he created them". Difference is good, it is part of the design. But here it does not appear as a division of tasks. It appears as richness for the same mission.

I keep thinking about how many couples' conversations would change if they started here. Before asking "who does what?", the question of Genesis is a different one:

What is our mission?

BRINGING IT TO TODAY

Many marital conflicts about money, home and children are, at their core, conflicts about roles: "that's your job, not mine". When the conversation starts with the shared mission (what kind of family we want to be, what God has placed in our hands), tasks stop being territory and become service.

And if you are not married? Genesis 1 speaks to you too. The mission to be fruitful, to care and to steward does not depend on marriage. It is given to humanity, and you take part in it with your gifts, your work, your relationships and your community.

EXERCISE 2

Genesis 1:28 in my own words

Rewrite the mission of Genesis 1:28 for your life today, using the words "we" and "our". If you are married, do it with your husband. If not, think of the people you walk with.

"God blessed us and said to us..."

What does "being fruitful" mean for us in this season?

What does "caring and stewarding" mean for us (home, work, money, community)?

Where are we living as "separate departments", and not as a shared mission?

Face to face and one flesh

Genesis 2 tells the same creation story through a closer lens. God forms the *adam* from the dust of the ground, breathes into him the breath of life, plants a garden and places him there. And then He makes a surprising statement:

GENESIS 2:18 · NIV

"The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'"

In everything God had created until then, the refrain was "and God saw that it was good". This is the first time something is "not good" (*lo tov*). The man alone does not complete the mission of Genesis 1.

Ezer kenegdo, once again

In the first study of this collection, we devoted many pages to this expression. Here, it is enough to recall the essentials. *Ezer* appears about twenty times in the Old Testament, and most of the time it describes God himself as the help of his people.

PSALM 121:1-2 · NIV

"I lift up my eyes to the mountains, where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Kenegdo joins *ke* (as) and *neged* (in front of, opposite). It is someone "as in front of him": at the same level, face to face. Neither above nor below. The woman is not an assistant to the man's project; she is the help without which the project cannot stand.

From the side, not from below

The word translated as "rib" is *tsela*. Outside this chapter, it almost always means "side": the side of a building, the side of the ark of the covenant (Exodus 25:12; 26:20). The image is of someone taken from the side, to stand at the side.

And only when the two stand before each other do the gendered words appear: *ish* (man) and *ishah* (woman). The first poem in the Bible is the man's exclamation when he sees the woman: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23).

GENESIS 2:24 · NIV

"That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh."

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

In the ancient world, it was the woman who left her father's house to live with her husband's family. The text reverses the direction: it is the man who leaves. And the verb "to be united" (*davaq*) is the same one used for the loyalty of a covenant, as when Ruth clings to Naomi (Ruth 1:14) and when Israel is called to hold fast to the LORD (Deuteronomy 10:20).

The design of Eden is covenant, not a hierarchy of roles.

When I think of my marriage, that is the word that comes to me: covenant. Caio and I did not meet to fill positions. We met to walk side by side, each one being help for the other. There are days when I am the *ezer*; there are days when he is.

EXERCISE 3

Side by side

Answer thinking about your marriage, or the closest relationship you have today (a friendship, a sibling, a work partnership).

In which moments do I feel "face to face", on equal footing, in this relationship?

In which moments do I feel below, or above?

How have I been help (ezer) for the other?

Where do I need, today, to be helped?



PART TWO

The rupture: what the fall describes

Genesis 2:15 and 3:16–19. Work, pain and the desire to rule.

Work was born in the garden

There is a common idea that work is a punishment, a consequence of sin. Many of us grew up hearing that "the sweat of your brow" is a curse. But look at what the text says, even before the fall:

GENESIS 2:15 · NIV

"The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."

The two Hebrew verbs here are *avad* and *shamar*. *Avad* means to cultivate, to work, and also to serve and to worship. *Shamar* means to keep, to watch over, to care for, to protect.

LOOK AT THE TEXT

The same two verbs appear together later to describe the service of the Levites in the tabernacle (Numbers 3:7-8). That is why many scholars understand Eden as a sanctuary: the first meeting place between God and humanity. Working in the garden was part of worship.

This changes a lot. Work was not born from sin. It is part of the design. And it is not just any work: it is to cultivate and to keep, to make grow and to protect. Two verbs that bring together what today we call "producing" and "caring".

In Eden, producing and caring were the same act of worship.

What about the order of events?

It is true that Genesis 2:15 happens before the creation of the woman, who only appears in verses 18 to 22. Some readings see in this a special responsibility of the man for provision. This argument deserves to be heard with respect.

But the text itself shows, three verses later, that this arrangement is "not good". The man who cultivates and keeps alone is the only thing in creation that God declares incomplete. The woman is brought precisely as *ezer* for this mission. And Genesis 1 had already entrusted the cultivation and stewardship of the earth to both.

READ WITH CARE

The order in which things happen in a narrative does not always establish a rule. Genesis 2 tells a story with a beginning, a middle and a climax; the climax is the meeting of the two. Whatever one's reading of the order of creation, the point on which everyone agrees is this: work comes before the fall and is part of the human vocation.

What does this say about the woman who works?

If work is part of the design, the woman who works is not running away from Eden. She is taking part in it. And if care is also part of the design, the man who cares is not giving anything up. He is fulfilling the *shamar*.

For many years I felt that my desire to build a career needed to be justified. As if working were an "extra" I had to make up for. Discovering that work was born in the garden brought me peace: the desire to cultivate, to build and to make things grow is not a detour. It is part of who God made me to be.

BRINGING IT TO TODAY

Work is not only paid employment. Running a home, raising children, serving in church, caring for elderly parents, starting a business, studying: all of this can be *avad* and *shamar*. The question is not "who works outside the home?", but "how is each one cultivating and keeping what God has entrusted?".

EXERCISE 4

Cultivate and keep

Make two lists. In the first, what you "cultivate" (make grow). In the second, what you "keep" (protect and care for). Then answer the questions.

WHAT I CULTIVATE (AVAD)

WHAT I KEEP (SHAMAR)

Which part of my work do I still see as "punishment" and not as vocation?

What guilt do I carry for working, or for not working outside the home?

The same pain for both

Then we come to Genesis 3, the chapter of the rupture. The serpent, the doubt, the choice, the hiding. And, after sin, God announces the consequences.

GENESIS 3:16-17 · NIV

"To the woman he said, 'I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.' To Adam he said, '[...] cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.'"

Condensed quotation: omitted passages are marked with [...].

Read it again and notice the word that repeats: pain, painful toil. In Hebrew, it is the same root for both. To the woman, God speaks of her *itsavon*; to the man, of his *itsavon*. The root *'atsav* means to grieve, to labor with pain.

LOOK AT THE TEXT

Both parts of the mission of Genesis 1:28, bringing forth life and caring for the earth, now carry pain. The woman suffers in bringing forth; the man suffers in cultivating. The text is not distributing realms ("children for her, provision for him"). It is showing that the whole mission was wounded.

There is another detail that often goes unnoticed. The man was taken from the ground (*adamah*), and the sentence speaks of him and the ground. Human life comes from the woman, and the sentence speaks of her and the children. Each one is wounded at the place of their origin, not in a "position".

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The archaeologist Carol Meyers, who spent decades studying village life in ancient Israel, reminds us that in an agricultural society the woman also worked hard in the fields. She ground grain, tended gardens and animals, wove, cooked and taught the children. For her, the woman's "pain" included the toil of the land and the pain of childbearing. She gave birth and she cultivated, both with toil.

And right after the sentence, the text records something beautiful:

GENESIS 3:20 · NIV

"Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living."

The name *Chavah* (Eve) is linked to "life", "living". It is given after the sentence, as a gesture of hope. And a few verses earlier, God had already announced that the offspring of the woman would crush the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). Even after the fall, the woman bears the promise.

The fall did not create work; it made it heavy.

BRINGING IT TO TODAY

Perhaps you know this *itsavon* well. The tiredness that doesn't go away, the bills that don't add up, the overload of the woman who works both outside and inside the home, the weight of the man who blames himself for "not being enough". The pain is real and it reaches both. Recognizing this is already a step: we are not fighting each other, we are both under the same weight.

EXERCISE 5

Where I feel the itsavon today

Identify where the pain of the fall shows up in your routine. If you are married, ask your husband to answer too, and compare.

Where do I feel weight in "bringing forth" (caring for people, children, relationships)?

Where do I feel weight in "cultivating" (work, provision, projects)?

Where does the other person feel weight that I may not have noticed?

What hope has God already given me, even in the middle of the pain?

Desire and rule

Still in Genesis 3:16, there is the most delicate sentence of the whole chapter: "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you".

The word translated as desire is *teshuqah*. It is rare: it appears only three times in the entire Old Testament. Once in Song of Songs 7:10, in a context of love. And once in the very next chapter of Genesis, in an almost identical construction, when God speaks to Cain:

GENESIS 4:7 · NIV

"If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

Notice: sin has *teshuqah* for Cain, and Cain must *mashal* (rule) over it. The same two words as in Genesis 3:16. That is why many scholars, including readers from very different theological traditions, understand Genesis 3:16 as describing the beginning of a **power struggle** between man and woman. Something that did not exist before.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The scholar Susan Foh, in a 1975 article that became a classic, was one of the first to connect Genesis 3:16 with Genesis 4:7. Other authors read "desire" differently, as emotional longing or dependence. The readings vary, but all of them recognize that the sentence describes a wounded relationship, and not the design of the beginning.

Description is not command

The verb "will rule" is in a form that, in Hebrew, describes what is going to happen. There is no imperative there ("rule!"). It is like the pain of childbirth and the thorns of the ground: God is announcing consequences, not giving orders to be carried out.

Nobody thinks they are disobeying God when they use anesthesia in childbirth or pull weeds from the garden. On the contrary: easing pain and fighting thorns is part of caring for creation. It makes sense to apply the same reasoning to the relationship between man and woman.

MATTHEW 19:8 · NIV

"Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning."

When He was questioned about marriage, Jesus did not point to Genesis 3. He pointed back to before the fall: "from the beginning". The beginning is the reference.

The man's rule over the woman appears for the first time in the Bible after sin, as a consequence, and not in Genesis 1 and 2, as design.

READ WITH CARE

Saying that the power struggle comes from the fall does not mean saying that every difference between man and woman comes from the fall. Genesis 1:27 celebrates difference: "male and female he created them". Sin did not create difference; it wounded the relationship. Our task is not to erase differences, but to heal the relationship.

BRINGING IT TO TODAY

The power struggle can show up in both directions: in the man who controls, and also in the woman who manipulates, demands or competes. Genesis 3:16 is not about "who is right". It is a mirror that shows how sin turns partners into rivals.

EXERCISE 6

Consequences I called God's will

Think of situations in which you accepted something as "that's just the way it is, God wants it this way", and which may simply be the fruit of the fall.

SITUATION I ACCEPTED

IS IT DESIGN OR FALL?

WHAT I CAN BRING TO GOD

Where does the power struggle show up in my relationships (on both sides)?



PART THREE

The layers of history

From ancient Israel to the factory: where the "man as provider" came from.

The home that produced

If the Bible does not determine that the man provides and the woman cares, where did this idea, so strong, come from? To answer, we need to visit the home of ancient Israel. And it was very different from ours.

The *beit av*, the "father's house"

The basic unit of Israelite society was the *beit av*, literally "father's house". It was not a nuclear family like ours, with father, mother and children in an apartment. It was an extended family: grandparents, married sons, grandchildren, sometimes servants and dependents, living in houses close together in the hill-country villages.

And that home was, above all, a place of production. There was no such thing as "going out to work". The work was right there: in the land, in the flock, at the oven, at the loom.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Carol Meyers, an archaeologist at Duke University, reconstructed the daily life of these villages from excavations and from studies of similar agricultural societies. According to her, women ground grain (a task that could take hours a day), baked bread, wove and spun, tended gardens and small animals, made pottery, managed the household stores and taught the children. Survival depended on everyone's work.

In that world, the question "who is the provider?" simply made no sense. Men and women provided together, with practical divisions that varied according to the family, the season and the need. The man plowed; the woman turned the harvest into food. Both were indispensable.

In ancient Israel, the home was not the place the provider came back to. It was the place where everyone provided.

What really was unequal

I need to be honest here, because it would be easy to romanticize. Israelite society was not egalitarian. The inheritance of land passed through the male line. The woman depended legally on her father and, later, on her husband. A widow with no sons could lose access to the land and, with it, her livelihood.

LOOK AT THE TEXT

That is exactly why the Law insists so much on protecting the widow, the orphan and the foreigner: leaving sheaves in the field for them (Deuteronomy 24:19–21), not depriving them of justice (Deuteronomy 24:17), remembering that God himself "defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow" (Deuteronomy 10:18). The woman's economic dependence was a reality that the Law **protects**, not an ideal that it **celebrates**.

And there is an episode that shows that even this rule could be revisited. The five daughters of Zelophehad, who had no brothers, went to Moses to ask for their father's inheritance. Moses brought their case before the LORD, and God answered: "What Zelophehad's daughters are saying is right" (Numbers 27:7). The Law was adjusted because of the request of five women.

READ WITH CARE

Showing that men and women worked together is not saying that ancient Israel was a model of equality. It is showing that the model "he goes out to work, she stays home" does not come from there. The Bible was written within patriarchal cultures, and it often corrects them from within, rather than simply reproducing them.

EXERCISE 7

The economy of my home

List everything that "makes your home work": money, but also food, organization, education, emotional care, relationships with the school, the church, the extended family. Then note who does each thing.

WHAT SUSTAINS OUR HOME

WHO DOES IT TODAY

HOW WE WOULD LIKE IT TO BE

What does this table reveal to me?

The home as the woman's sphere

Centuries later, when the New Testament was written, the Mediterranean world was under strong Greek and Roman influence. And an idea was circulating there that will sound familiar.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Philosophers such as Aristotle (in his *Politics*) and Xenophon (in the *Oeconomicus*) taught that the man belongs to the public sphere (the marketplace, politics, trade) and the woman to the inner sphere of the home. Aristotle organized the household into three pairs of relationships: husband and wife, father and children, master and slave. In each pair, one rules and the other obeys.

The idea of "separate spheres" is Greek before it is Christian.

It is within this world that the so-called "household codes" appear in the letters of Paul and Peter: instructions for husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and slaves (Ephesians 5:21 to 6:9; Colossians 3:18 to 4:1; 1 Peter 2:18 to 3:7). The frame is the same as Aristotle's. But the content holds surprises.

What changes within the frame

- Paul speaks **directly** to wives, children and slaves, treating them as moral persons, capable of choosing. In the Greek frame, only the head of the household was addressed.
- Everything begins with "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21): a mutual submission.
- The greater weight of the instructions falls on those who hold power. To the husband, Paul asks that he love as Christ, who "gave himself up" for the church (Ephesians 5:25).
- To the master, he recalls that he too has a Master in heaven, and "there is no favoritism with him" (Ephesians 6:9).

EPHESIANS 5:28-29 · NIV

"In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church."

LOOK AT THE TEXT

The verb translated as "care for" is *thalpō*, which carries the image of warming, of holding close in warmth. Paul uses the same word in 1 Thessalonians 2:7 to describe a mother caring for her little children. Of the husband, the Bible asks for a care spoken in the language of a mother's embrace.

And the word "head" (*kephalē*, Ephesians 5:23)? This is one of the longest debates among serious scholars. Some understand "authority"; others, "source, origin" or "the one who goes ahead". Both readings find support in ancient Greek texts. What everyone recognizes is that, in Ephesians, the "head" is defined by Christ, who gives himself, and not by a boss who serves himself.

READ WITH CARE

We do not need to empty Ephesians 5 of meaning or pretend it is not there. It should be read in full, starting from verse 21, and in its own world. And it is worth noting: the text speaks of love, self-giving, mutual submission and care. It does not distribute economic tasks. It does not say who earns the household's money.

The same applies to Titus 2:3–5, where Paul asks older women to teach younger women to be, among other things, good workers at home (in the Greek word *oikourgous*). In the first-century home, this included production, managing servants and trade, as in Proverbs 31. And the stated purpose is missional: "so that no one will malign the word of God" (Titus 2:5), the same reason given to slaves shortly after (2:10).

EXERCISE 8

Frame and content

Read Ephesians 5:21–33 in full, preferably in two translations. Then answer.

What does this text ask of the wife?

What does this text ask of the husband? (Notice the number of verses.)

Which words speak of self-giving and care, and not of power?

What, in our home, looks more like Aristotle than like Christ?

From the factory to Brazil today

If the model "he provides, she cares" does not come from Eden or from ancient Israel, where does it come from? An important part of the answer is less than three hundred years away from us.

When work left the home

With the Industrial Revolution, between the 18th and 19th centuries, production left the home and went to the factory, the shop, the office. For the first time in history, for most families, working began to mean **leaving**. The father began to receive a wage outside, and the home stopped being a place of production to become a place of consumption and rest.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The British and American middle class of the 19th century turned this economic change into a moral ideal. The doctrine of "separate spheres" emerged: the man as provider in the competitive world, the woman as the "angel of the house", guardian of morals and religion. In the 20th century, especially in the United States of the 1950s, this model became a symbol of the "Christian family" and was exported by churches, missions and the media.

Writers from very different perspectives reach similar conclusions. Nancy Pearcey, from a conservative perspective, describes how the Industrial Revolution separated work from the home and weakened the father's role inside the house. The historian Beth Allison Barr, from another perspective, shows how the Victorian ideal was read back into the Bible. They disagree on many things, but they agree on this point.

Much of what we call the "biblical model" has more of the factory than of Eden.

The cost of the model

This model brought good things to many families: protection, a mother's presence, stability. There is no need to despise it. But when it is presented as God's command, it charges a high price:

- The woman who needs or wants to work feels guilty before God.
- The woman who devotes herself to the home is seen as "dependent", and not as someone who works.

- The man starts measuring his own worth by his salary, and sinks when he loses his job.
- The father becomes someone who "helps" at home, as if the home were not his.

Brazil today

BRINGING IT TO TODAY

According to the 2022 Demographic Census by IBGE, Brazil's national statistics institute, 49.1% of Brazilian households have a woman as the person responsible. In 2010, it was 38.7%. In many families, including in churches, the woman is the main or only source of income. A teaching that measures a man's worth by "being the provider" can create guilt in the woman who supports the home and shame in the man who, for a season, cannot. Without the Bible having asked for any of it.

In my own home, I lived this up close. There was a time when Caio went through a job transition and was without a steady job. The "model" would say that something was wrong. But what I saw was a man who used that season to be closer to our son, to take him to swimming lessons, to be part of his routine. And that did not make him any less of a man.

EXERCISE 9

Where does my model come from?

For each idea below, try to identify its origin: the Bible (which text?), culture, family, church, media.

AN IDEA I HOLD	WHERE IT CAME FROM	WHAT THE BIBLE ACTUALLY SAYS
"The man must support the home."		
"A mother's place is at home."		
"A father who stays home is failing."		

Which of these ideas do I need to give back to God?



PART FOUR

Texts that open new paths

The woman of valor, the man of valor and the women who supported Jesus.

The woman of valor

If there is one text used to define "the woman's role", it is Proverbs 31. And that is exactly where the Bible surprises us.

PROVERBS 31:10 · NIV

"A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies."

Older English translations render it "a virtuous woman".

None of these translations can carry the full weight of the Hebrew word *chayil*. It means strength, valor, capability. It is the word used for valiant warriors (the angel calls Gideon a "mighty warrior", Judges 6:12), for armies and even for wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18 speaks of the God who gives "the ability to produce wealth"). *Eshet chayil* may best be rendered "woman of valor" or "woman of strength".

What she does

VERSE	WHAT SHE DOES	SPHERE
13	Selects wool and flax and works with eager hands	production
14	Like the merchant ships, brings her food from afar	trade, provision
15	Gets up while it is still night, provides food, organizes her servants	managing people
16	Considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings plants a vineyard	investment
17	Her arms are strong for her tasks	language of strength
18	Sees that her trading is profitable	assessing results
20	Opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy	social action
24	Makes linen garments and sells them	sales
26	Speaks with wisdom, with faithful instruction on her tongue	teaching
27	Watches over the affairs of her household	leadership

A paraphrase of the verses, based on the NIV. Read the whole chapter in your Bible.

She buys land, invests, sells, manages and feeds the household. The text that closes the book of wisdom describes a woman who **provides**. And her husband? He is respected at the city gate, among the elders (v. 23), has full confidence in her (v. 11) and praises her: "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all" (v. 29).

Real or symbolic?

Some readings see this woman as a figure of the church. That allegorical reading arose among the church fathers, but it has no support in the Hebrew text. I have always seen her as a real woman, possible to live out. And I believe she is. But we need to understand how the text was written.

LOOK AT THE TEXT

Proverbs 31:10–31 is an **acrostic** poem: each verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, from *aleph* to *tav*. It is like saying "the woman from A to Z", a complete portrait. The scholar Al Wolters showed that the poem has the form of a **heroic hymn**, like the songs that celebrated warriors. She also mirrors Lady Wisdom at the beginning of the book, who "has built her house" (Proverbs 9:1).

In other words: it is an idealized portrait of real virtues. It is not a schedule to complete before breakfast. In Jewish tradition, this poem is sung by the husband to his wife at the Sabbath table, every Friday evening. It is a blessing, not a demand.

PROVERBS 31:30 · NIV

"Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised."

The center of Proverbs 31 is not productivity. It is the fear of the LORD.

READ WITH CARE

Proverbs 31 proves that a woman can provide, and that this is celebrated in the Bible. But it is not a treatise on leadership in marriage, nor a goal of perfection. Using it to create guilt ("I will never be like that") is to miss the spirit of the poem.

EXERCISE 10

Proverbs 31 without guilt

Read Proverbs 31:10–31 slowly, preferably out loud.

Which verse inspires me? Why?

Which verse weighs on me? Why?

In which area of my life am I already an *eshet chayil*, and never acknowledged it?

If someone sang this poem to me, what would I like to hear?

The man of valor

This is the discovery that moved me the most in this study.

The word *chayil* also appears in the book of Ruth. Ruth was a Moabite, a foreigner, a widow, who left her own land to stay with her mother-in-law, Naomi. In Bethlehem, to support the two of them, she went to work gathering leftover grain in the field of a man named Boaz. And it is Boaz who says to her:

RUTH 3:11 · NIV

"And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character."

"A woman of noble character" here is *eshet chayil*, the same expression as in Proverbs 31:10.

But the book had already used the word before. When Boaz is introduced, the text calls him *ish gibbor chayil* (Ruth 2:1), which the NIV translates as "a man of standing". Literally: a strong man, a man of valor.

Ruth and Boaz are the couple in which man and woman receive the same title.

What makes Boaz *chayil*

Boaz had land and influence. But the book shows his valor in other things:

- He greets his workers with a blessing: "The LORD be with you!" (Ruth 2:4).
- He notices the vulnerable foreigner and protects her (2:8–9).
- He recognizes her worth before any personal interest: "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law" (2:11).
- He acts with integrity, respecting the Law and the right of another relative (3:12–13; 4:1–10).

Ruth is also *chayil*: loyal, hardworking, courageous, the provider for her mother-in-law. Neither is valiant "in place of" the other. Both are, each in their own way.

PAUSE TO REFLECT

The valor the Bible recognizes in Boaz is not in the size of his land, but in his character: faith, generosity, respect, integrity. Ruth's valor is not in a role either, but in her loyalty and courage.

When I read this, I thought of my own story. I was looking for a man of valor: someone who knew who he was, in whom he believed, and who put God above everything. I realized that the Bible does not reserve valor for one side. Both are called to be *chayil*.

Valor has no gender; it has character.

BRINGING IT TO TODAY

If you are single, Ruth 2 and 3 offer a portrait of what to look for: not the man who "provides" in the narrow sense, but the man of faith, respect and integrity. If you are married, perhaps it is time to acknowledge out loud your husband's *chayil*, and to hear yours from him.

EXERCISE 11

People of valor

Choose the part that applies to you. If you wish, answer both.

For single women: five marks of a man of valor that I am looking for (thinking of Boaz):

For married women: where do I see *chayil* in my husband? Have I told him?

Where do I see *chayil* in myself (loyalty, courage, work, faith)?

A sentence of acknowledgement I will say or write this week:

Who supported Jesus

The New Testament continues this thread. Luke records a detail that we often pass over too quickly:

LUKE 8:1-3 · NIV

"The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) [...]; Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means."

Condensed quotation.

The Greek verb here is *diakoneō*: to serve, to provide. The ministry of Jesus was supported, in part, by women. The Son of God himself accepted being provided for by them.

A gallery of women who provided

WOMAN	TEXT	WHAT SHE DID
Daughters of Zelophehad	Numbers 27:1-11	Claimed their inheritance of land; God said they were right
Abigail	1 Samuel 25	Managed the household's goods and prevented a tragedy
The Shunammite woman	2 Kings 4:8-37; 8:1-6	Made decisions for her household and reclaimed her land from the king
Joanna, Susanna and others	Luke 8:1-3	Supported Jesus and the Twelve out of their own means
Tabitha (Dorcas)	Acts 9:36-42	Sewed clothing and did good; called a "disciple"
Lydia	Acts 16:14-15, 40	Dealer in purple cloth; opened her home to the first church in Europe
Priscilla and Aquila	Acts 18:2-3, 26	Tentmakers who, together, taught Apollos
Phoebe	Romans 16:1-2	Deacon of the church and benefactor of many, including Paul

The Bible never rebukes a woman for working, managing resources or supporting the household.

And 1 Timothy 5:8?

1 TIMOTHY 5:8 · NIV

"Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

This is the verse most often quoted to say that "the man must provide". But the context (5:3–16) is the care of widows by their own family. In Greek, the subject is "anyone" (*tis*), without gender. And a few verses later, Paul applies the same duty to a woman:

1 TIMOTHY 5:16 · NIV

"If any woman who is a believer has widows in her care, she should continue to help them."

The text speaks of family responsibility, of children and grandchildren who care for the older ones (5:4). It does not speak of a role exclusive to the man.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Another precious passage: 1 Corinthians 7:3–4. In a world where a wife's body was considered her husband's property, Paul writes that "the wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife" (NIV). It is the most radical reciprocity in the whole New Testament.

READ WITH CARE

Narratives describe; they do not legislate. Some readings will say that these women acted in special circumstances. Even so, the pattern is too consistent to be merely an exception. And none of them is rebuked.

EXERCISE 12

The gallery and me

Choose one of the women in the table and read the full text in your Bible.

Which woman did I choose, and what struck me most in her story?

What resource did she have in her hands, and how did she use it?

What resource do I have in my hands today to support God's work and the people around me?

What belief about "women and money" do I need to revisit?



PART FIVE

The new creation: the way back is forward

What Christ has already restored, what still groans, and the mission of two today.

The already and the not yet

For a long time, I thought of redemption as a return to Eden, to the moment before the fall. As if Jesus had come to take us back to the garden. But the Bible points to something even greater.

It begins in a garden and ends in a garden-city. In Revelation 21 and 22, the new Jerusalem comes down from heaven, and through the middle of it flows the river of the water of life. On each side of the river stands the tree of life, and its leaves are "for the healing of the nations" (Revelation 22:2). The tree that was guarded after the fall (Genesis 3:24) is within reach again. And the One seated on the throne says: "I am making everything new!" (Revelation 21:5).

Redemption does not take us back to the garden. It takes us forward, to the garden-city.

What has already begun

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 · NIV

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

GALATIANS 3:28 · NIV

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

LOOK AT THE TEXT

In Galatians 3:28, Paul changes the construction of the sentence. In the first two pairs he writes "neither... nor" (neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free). In the third, he writes literally "there is no male **and** female" (*arsen kai thēly*), exactly the words of the Greek translation of Genesis 1:27, "male and female he created them". It is a deliberate echo of creation: in Christ, the division the fall turned into a struggle loses its power to define anyone's worth before God.

And we see the signs of this new creation in Jesus' own ministry. He let Mary sit at his feet, in the position of a disciple, and said she had chosen "what is better" (Luke 10:39–42). He made women the first witnesses of the resurrection (John 20:17–18), at a time when a woman's

testimony carried little weight. And at Pentecost, the Spirit was poured out on "my servants, both men and women" (Acts 2:18).

What has not yet come

At the same time, we know the story is not over. The body still ages and gets sick. Work still has thorns. Childbirth still has pain. And sin still pulls us toward the power struggle of Genesis 3:16.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Theologians such as George Eldon Ladd and Oscar Cullmann called this tension the "already and not yet". The Kingdom of God has already come in Jesus, but has not yet come in fullness. We live between the resurrection and Christ's return: already reconciled, not yet fully restored.

For marriage and for the relationships between man and woman, this means two things. First: we do not need to accept the struggle as destiny, because the new creation has already begun. Second: we do not need to despair when it shows up, because the fullness has not yet come. We live as a sign, not as perfection.

We are not looking for a lost past. We are looking for a promised future that has already begun.

EXERCISE 13

Signs of the new creation

Think about your home, your marriage or your closest relationships.

Where do I already see signs of the new creation (partnership, honor, mutual help)?

Where do I still see the marks of the fall (struggle, weight, silence)?

What does it mean, for me, to live as a "sign" and not as "perfection"?

A short prayer for the "not yet" of my home:

Seasons of the body, two-way provision

There were seasons of withdrawal in my life, like when Filipe was a baby. And even then Caio was always present. In the early hours of the morning, when our little one wanted to nurse, only I could do it. He would get up with me and say: "call me and I'll change the diapers". And so we went, each one helping the other. There was joy, not weight, in it. Everything felt lighter.



I nursed. He changed the diaper. Neither of us was fulfilling a role; both of us were fulfilling a mission.

Years later, he went through a job transition and spent some time without a steady job. He dedicated himself to being closer to Filipe. Then he went to do an MBA, and I stayed with our son; then it was my turn, and he stayed. We have always supported each other, with joy in seeing what the other was accomplishing.

Then came the dream of more children, and the path of adoption. We were already older, Filipe was already a teenager, and two little girls arrived, Monica and Ana Beatriz. We had the privilege of being chosen to be their parents. Their story belongs to them; one day, if they wish, they themselves will share it. What I can tell is our part: this story turned us inside out, and we saw the power that environment and love have to transform lives inside a home.



Our family the way it appears here: with lightness, and keeping our girls' faces private.

And when I reached perimenopause, my life turned upside down. The powerful woman I knew seemed broken, as if she had stopped working. Once again, I could and can count on Caio. He cheers for me, looks for things that might help me, supported my decision to change careers. He believes in me, many times, more than I believe in myself.

Ezer in both directions

These seasons taught me something about *ezer* that I had not understood before. The one who was created to help also needs to be helped. The help of Eden runs both ways. In the seasons when the woman is more vulnerable, the husband is called to be *ezer* for her. And the other way around.

1 PETER 3:7 · NIV

"Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life."

Fragility here (*asthenesterō*) is not a reason for diminishment. It is a reason for **honor** (*timē*). And both are co-heirs: no one inherits more than the other.

ROMANS 8:22-23 · NIV

"We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies."

I confess I was moved to read the word "adoption" in that text. The redemption of the body is still to come. For now, God's power "is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). The word for weakness there, *astheneia*, belongs to the same family as Peter's "weaker".

READ WITH CARE

What the body goes through in its seasons is not spiritual weakness. Pregnancy, the postpartum period, illness, perimenopause and menopause call for medical care, real adjustments in the rhythm of the home and a great deal of compassion, not guilt. Faith does not replace that care; it sustains us while we take care.

Providing is not a fixed role by gender. It is what each one does for the other according to the season of life.

EXERCISE 14

The map of seasons

If you are married, do this with your husband. If not, think of the people who walk with you.

WHAT SEASON AM I IN?

WHAT HELP DO I NEED?

WHAT HELP CAN I OFFER?

A past season in which we were help for each other:

A concrete adjustment our home needs to make in this season:

A care for my body that I have been putting off:

A mission of two today

In our adoption story, there were enormous challenges. There were moments when we thought we would not make it. And, stopping to think about it, I realize something that marked me deeply: the moments when we thought we would not make it were born exactly when we were not walking so closely together.

ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10, 12 · NIV

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. [...] A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Condensed quotation.

Two are better than one. But the cord that does not break has three strands. In practice, how do we recover something of what was lost in Eden?

Six paths

1. **Start with the mission, not the tasks.** Before "who does what?", ask: "what is our mission in this season?". It is the question of Genesis 1:28.
2. **Share by gifts, energy and season, not by gender.** There are seasons when he provides more, others when she provides more. That diminishes no one.
3. **Be ezer for each other.** Help runs both ways. Ask often: "what help do you need today?".
4. **Bring the care of the home and the children to both of you.** The husband does not "help" at home; the home is his too. Ephesians 5:29 asks of the husband the verb of one who warms and feeds.
5. **Honor the body in every season.** Vulnerability calls for adjustment and honor, not guilt (1 Peter 3:7).
6. **If you are not married, the mission is yours too.** The mission of Genesis 1 does not depend on marriage. The community of faith is called to be help, as it was with the widows (1 Timothy 5) and as Tabitha was with the clothes she sewed (Acts 9:36-39).

READ WITH CARE

My story is not a rule for yours. There are couples in which one of the two stays home by choice and lives it with joy and faithfulness. There are women who support their homes alone. There are widows, divorced women, single mothers. What this study proposes is not a new model, but a new starting point: the shared mission before God.

Caio and I have our faults and flaws. I did not find a perfect marriage. I found a partnership that looks more like Eden than like the fall: two who help each other, who switch places when the season asks for it, and who know that a third one holds them both.

Today I have my consultancy and serve on boards. Caio is an entrepreneur who runs his own companies. Filipe is on the other side of the world, and the girls are growing up at home. But this is who we are today. Tomorrow is in God's hands. We will keep fulfilling dreams until our last day here, and eternity will be an incredible adventure.



The hands of our family: different sizes, one mission.

When we are together, nothing can stop us. Because, beyond the two of us, God has always been and will always be with us.

EXERCISE 15

Six paths, one conversation

For each path, give a score from 1 to 5 for how you live it today, and note a possible step.

PATH	SCORE	A POSSIBLE STEP
1. Start with the mission		
2. Gifts and seasons, not gender		
3. Be ezer for each other		
4. Care of the home by both		
5. Honor the body in every season		
6. Mission with the community		

When was the last time we were not walking so closely together? What happened?

The covenant of a shared mission

This study does not end with inspiration. It ends with a conversation and a decision. If you are married, set aside unhurried time with your husband, away from screens, and fill this in together. If you are not married, make this covenant with God and with one or two people from your community.

MY NEXT STEP

1. What is our mission in this season?

2. What gifts and what energy does each of us have today?

3. Where does one of us need the other's help?

4. What task will we redistribute, and how?

5. What inherited belief will we give back to God?

6. What is the first concrete step, and when?

7. When will we talk about this again?

Signatures and date:

We were not created to compete for places, but to fulfill a mission together.

The third strand

Lord, thank You that, in the beginning, You did not create us to compete, but to walk together. Heal in me the beliefs that were born from the fall and not from Your heart. Free me from the guilt that does not come from You and from the shame that You did not place on me.

Teach me to help and to be helped, to provide and to be cared for, according to the season I am living. Where my body groans, be my strength. Where we have drifted apart, bring us close again.

May my home, my life and my relationships be a small sign of the new creation that has already begun in Christ. And may You always be, beyond the two of us, the third strand that holds us together.

Amen.



A LETTER TO YOU

From woman to woman

Before you close this study.

Dear reader,

Perhaps your home looks nothing like mine. Perhaps you support your family on your own, or have chosen to devote yourself to your home, or live in a marriage where conversations about "who does what" still hurt. This study was not written for you to copy my story. It was written so that you would return, with me, to God's heart in the beginning.

I wrote these pages in the middle of real life: family, work, the perimenopause that turned everything upside down, two girls growing up at home, a son on the other side of the world, and a husband who believes in me more than I believe in myself. I did not write from the height of a perfect marriage. I wrote from inside an imperfect and deeply loved partnership.

If this study has done its job, you are closing these pages with less guilt and more freedom. Free from guilt for providing or for caring. Free to look at the man beside you, or at the people in your community, and ask: what is our mission?

Ruth and Boaz did not know they would be remembered as the couple in which both were people of valor. Joanna and Susanna did not know their support would make it into the Gospel. None of them saw the size of what they were doing. They simply walked together, before God.

*This is who we are today. Tomorrow is in God's hands. And eternity
will be an incredible adventure.*

With love,
Priscila

Six meetings to walk together

This study can be used in small groups, women's groups, couples' groups, church gatherings and mentoring. The suggestion below divides the material into six meetings. Adapt it freely.

MEETING 1 · THE BELIEF WE INHERITED

Chapter 1 · Bible reading: Genesis 1:26–28

Opening: What sentence about "a man's role and a woman's role" did you hear most as a child?

To discuss: 1. Where did our beliefs come from? 2. What guilt did they create? 3. What would it look like to start with the mission, and not the tasks?

Prayer: Ask for courage to take your beliefs back to the Bible.

MEETING 2 · THE DESIGN

Chapters 2 to 4 · Bible reading: Genesis 2:15–24

Opening: What does it mean, for you, to be "face to face" with someone?

To discuss: 1. What changes when we learn that all the verbs of Genesis 1:28 are plural? 2. What do *ezer kenegdo* and *tsela* teach? 3. Is work a punishment or a vocation?

Prayer: Give thanks for the mission God entrusted to humanity.

MEETING 3 · THE RUPTURE

Chapters 5 and 6 · Bible reading: Genesis 3:14–20; 4:7

Opening: Where do you feel the "weight" of the fall in your routine?

To discuss: 1. What does the same word for pain for both mean? 2. What is the difference between description and command? 3. How does the power struggle show up in our relationships?

Prayer: Ask for healing for relationships wounded by the struggle.

MEETING 4 · THE LAYERS OF HISTORY

Chapters 7 to 9 · Bible reading: Ephesians 5:21–33

Opening: How did your grandmother and your mother organize their homes?

To discuss: 1. What surprises us about the home in ancient Israel? 2. What does Paul change within Aristotle's frame? 3. What in our "model" has more of the factory than of Eden?

Prayer: Ask for wisdom to distinguish command from custom.

MEETING 5 · WOMEN AND MEN OF VALOR

Chapters 10 to 12 · Bible reading: Proverbs 31:10–31; Ruth 2:1; 3:11; Luke 8:1–3

Opening: Who is a woman of *chayil* in your life? And a man?

To discuss: 1. How can we read Proverbs 31 without guilt? 2. What do Ruth and Boaz teach about valor? 3. What does it mean that Jesus was supported by women?

Prayer: Each participant gives thanks for someone's *chayil*.

MEETING 6 · THE MISSION OF TWO TODAY

Chapters 13 to 15 and Final challenge · Bible reading: Ecclesiastes 4:9–12; Romans 8:22–23

Opening: What season of life are you in?

To discuss: 1. What does it mean to live the "already and not yet"? 2. How can we be *ezer* in both directions? 3. Which of the six paths is most urgent for you?

Application: Each participant shares (if she wishes) one step from her "covenant of a shared mission".

Prayer: Close with the study's closing prayer, out loud, together.

What God spoke to me in this study

Sources and notes for this study

Scripture references

Genesis 1:26–28; 2:7, 15, 18–24; 3:15–20, 24; 4:7 · Exodus 25:12; 26:20 · Numbers 3:7–8; 27:1–11 · Deuteronomy 8:18; 10:18–20; 24:17–21 · Judges 6:12 · Ruth 1:14; 2:1–11; 3:11–13; 4:1–10 · 1 Samuel 25 · 2 Kings 4:8–37; 8:1–6 · Psalm 121:1–2 · Proverbs 9:1; 31:10–31 · Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 · Song of Songs 7:10 · Matthew 19:4–8 · Luke 8:1–3; 10:39–42 · John 20:17–18 · Acts 2:17–18; 9:36–42; 16:14–15, 40; 18:2–3, 26 · Romans 8:22–23; 16:1–2 · 1 Corinthians 7:3–4 · 2 Corinthians 5:17; 12:9 · Galatians 3:28 · Ephesians 5:21–33; 6:9 · Colossians 3:18–4:1 · 1 Thessalonians 2:7 · 1 Timothy 5:3–16 · Titus 2:3–5, 10 · 1 Peter 2:18–3:7 · Revelation 21:5; 22:1–2.

Translation

This study was originally written in Portuguese. In this English edition, Scripture quotations follow the wording of the New International Version (NIV). Passages marked as "condensed quotation" omit parts of the verse, marked with [...]. Tables summarizing Proverbs 31 are paraphrases.

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Statistical data

IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), 2022 Demographic Census: 49.1% of households with a woman as the person responsible (38.7% in 2010).

About the images

The images in this study, except for the photo of the family's hands and the family illustration, are artistic representations created to support the narrative. They are not historical records or portraits of the biblical characters or of the real people mentioned.

Priscila Abondanza

Priscila Abondanza is a senior executive, founder of Mentisup and a writer. She spent 30 years in the corporate world, leading teams, digital transformation and customer experience. Today she lives a portfolio career: consulting, board work, mentoring and writing.

With a postgraduate degree in Neuroscience and Applied Psychology, she devotes this season of life to bringing together the science that explains the mind, the faith that sustains the soul and the practice that transforms the day. She is the author of **O Jardim de Abundância** (The Garden of Abundance), a book on positive emotions, a full life and well-being grounded in neuroscience and Christian spirituality.

Married to Caio for more than 25 years, mother of Filipe, Monica and Ana Beatriz, she writes from real life, including its crossings. This study was born from one of them: the search, full of questions, to live out in marriage a mission of two before God.

Science, faith and real life — in practice.



@PRIABONDANZA

I N E D E N , G O D D I D N O T D I V I D E T A S K S

He gave a mission to two

The fall did not create work; it made it heavy. And it did not create the difference between man and woman; it wounded the relationship between them. In Christ, the way back to Eden is forward.

P R I S C I L A A B O N D A N Z A